

The Olive-backed Pocket Mouse is a member of the Upper Sonoran Life Zone.⁸ It is usually associated with sandy soils of the grasslands, but may be found on the edge of the Aspen Parklands.¹ I am not familiar with these northern localities so I am not able to comment on the habitat occupied by these mice. Because the pellets were recovered from three nests at three separate locations during the nesting season, I assume that the mice came from a location close to the nest sites rather than being carried in from some distant point, and, therefore, constitute a valid range extension. The type of habitat used and density of mice in the area will have to wait on someone going into the area and doing a comprehensive survey.

- ¹BANFIELD, A. W. F. 1974. *Mammals of Canada*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- ²NERO, R. W. 1957. *The pocket mouse in Saskatchewan*. Blue Jay, 15:172-173.
- ³NERO, R. W. 1958. *Additional pocket mouse records*. Blue Jay, 16:176-179.
- ⁴NERO, R. W. 1959. *Some recent mammal records*. Blue Jay, 17:169.
- ⁵NERO, R. W. 1965. *Recent pocket mouse records for Saskatchewan*. Blue Jay, 23:36-38.
- ⁶NERO, R. W. 1965. *Three pocket mouse records*. Blue Jay, 23:173.
- ⁷RICHARDS, J. H. (ed.). 1969. *Atlas of Saskatchewan*. Published by the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.
- ⁸SOPER, J. D. 1964. *Mammals of Alberta*. Hamly Press, Edmonton.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN WILD FLOWERS

By. A. E. Porsild

Illustrated by Dagny Tande Lid.
National Museum of Natural Sciences,
National Museums of Canada and Parks
Canada,
Department of Indian and Northern Affairs,
Ottawa.
154 pp., 1974, \$5.00.

This volume is, as its author says, designed for the use of the visitor to Jasper, Banff and Waterton National Parks, to introduce him to the commoner and more spectacular wild flowers of the area, with emphasis on the alpine and subalpine zones (above and just below timberline). Of about 2,250 plants known to the author — and few will know more — from the national parks of the Alberta Rockies, 250 odd have here been illustrated and

described and some 180 more have been mentioned with field marks, but not illustrated. Besides visibly flowering plants a selection of ferns, conifers, rushes and even grasses and sedges have been treated.

A. E. Porsild, Curator Emeritus, National Herbarium of Canada, has been studying the northern, arctic and alpine flora for the last 45 years or more and has published widely upon this subject at both scientific and popular levels. His illustrator, Mrs. Dagny Tande Lid, contributed the drawings both for Hultén's monumental "Flora of Alaska" (1968) and Porsild's own "Flora of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago" (1957).

The pictures are in full colour, thus they must have begun as paintings. Almost all have come out in the printing true to life. (*Agoseris glauca* is shown with pink ligules; all material I've ever seen had yellow flowers.) From the scale given beside the pictures, one can estimate the size of the plant in life. With these illustrations it should be easy to recognize living material of the species shown. For this task, a good botanical drawing — as these are — is superior to a

photograph since the important characters may be made to stand out from a morass of detail.

One minor complaint may be brought up. A few plants appear here under scientific names other than those in most common use. I saw a picture of a lily indistinguishable from our Prairie Lily, *Lilium philadelphicum* var *andinum*, but was a bit puzzled in that its name appeared on the opposite page as *Lilium montanum* A Nels. A check of Moss' "Flora of Alberta" showed that the two names were synonyms, however. Another example is that the three plants treated here in the genus *Melandrium* are in most

North American floras placed in the genus *Lychnis*. This and similar examples will cause the beginner some confusion should he cross-check with other floras.

The 5" x 9" dimensions of the book fit it for carrying in a pocket, and the plastic-coated cover should resist some moisture; thus it has been made for use in the field.

The book appears to me to be excellently adapted for its author's purpose of introducing the beginner to the flora of our national parks in the Cordillera of Alberta. — *John H. Hudson*, 103 Richmond Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

NATURE IN FICTION

by DIANE SARICH*

Your local library has many novels dealing with the fascinating world of nature. These provide "a handy escape from our world of freeways and high-rises, letting readers all over the world share in a new discovery of man's natural heritage". The following are a few from the Saskatoon Public Library.

ALDRIDGE, James. *The marvelous Mongolian*. 1974. 183 p. A young stallion from the Mongolian uplands is taken to Wales in hopes of establishing a colony of Przewalski horses, an ancient breed in danger of extinction.

Y A365.

BICKHAM, Jack M. *Baker's hawk*. 1974. 233 p. Billy Baker, 11, rescues a baby hawk from a fox and with the help of a mysterious old mountain man nurses it into a proud adult bird trained to respond to a homemade whistle.

B583.

BODSWORTH, Fred. *Last of the curlews*. 1955. 128 p. A year in the life of a lone Eskimo Curlew, following his long flight from the Arctic to the Antarctic and back in response to his migratory urge and in desperate search for a mate.

598.2/B668.

BODSWORTH, Fred. *The sparrow's fall*. 1967. 255 p. Jacob Atook sets out on a long trek in search of game when the cold forces the caribou to migrate for food.

B668.

BODSWORTH, Fred. *The strange one*. 1959. 400 p. A poignant novel about a young naturalist banding geese in the bleak muskeg country of James Bay, an Indian girl, and a wild barnacle goose blown far off course by a hurricane.

B668.

BROWN, Joseph. *The forests of the night*. 1974. 278 p. A wounded jaguar, now including cattle and men as his victims, is hunted down in the primitive Sierra country of Mexico.

B878.

BURNFORD, Sheila. *The incredible journey*. 1961. 145 p. Two dogs, an English bull terrier and a Labrador retriever, and a Siamese cat find their way home through 250 miles of northern Ontario wilderness.

B965.

*Saskatoon Public Library,
311 - 23rd Street East,
Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 0J6.

- LARKSON, Ewan. *The running of the deer*. 1972. 277 p. The life of a red male deer from his birth to his majestic maturity is told along with the story of the Seven Seas Hunt where two stags and a number of hinds are run to their death. C613.
- LARKSON, Ewan. *Syla, the mink*. 1968. 126 p. The life story of a mink that escapes from the fur farm where she was born and makes a new home in a remote valley where she must learn the laws of survival. C613.
- CKERT, Allan. *The Great Auk*. 1963. 202 p. The life and death of the last Great Auk — diving for food or safety, the storms at sea and on land, and its massacre by human hunters. E19.
- CKERT, Allan W. *Incident at Hawk's Hill*. 1971. 1973 p. Seven-year-old Benji wanders away from his farm home and is adopted by a female badger. After several weeks they are rescued and return home, inseparable friends. Y E19.
- CKERT, Allan W. *The silent sky*. 1965. 243 p. A fictional account of how the Passenger Pigeon, whose greatest menace was man, was wiped off the face of the earth. 598.65/E19.
- LLIS, Melvin. *The wild runners*. 1970. 183 p. A young Indian half-breed, thinking there is no hope for him in the white man's world, sees himself in a puppy he finds that is half coyote, half hound. E47.
- RISON-ROCHE, Roger. *The raid*. 1964. 244 p. A raid is made on a herd of reindeer and more than a thousand of the animals are stolen, setting off a feud between two rival clans of Lapps. F917.
- GEORGE, Jean C. *Julie of the wolves*. 1972. Winner of the 1973 Newbery Medal, this is the story of a young Eskimo girl who runs away from home, gets lost, and becomes accepted by a pack of arctic wolves. Y G348.
- YDE, Dayton O. *Strange companion*. Clarke, Irwin, 1975. The story of a young boy, his adopted baby whooping Crane and the adventures they have while lost in the North. On order.
- MANNIX, Daniel P. *The healer*. 1971. 214 p. A dog and a wild coyote are hunted as werewolves by a superstitious group of Pennsylvania farmers. M284.
- MANNIX, Daniel P. *The killers*. 1968. 255 p. The story of a life-long duel between two birds — Whitehackle, a fighting cock, and Ishmael, a female Cooper's Hawk. 598.2 M284
- MURPHY, Robert. *The mountain lion*. 1969. 128 p. Seeta, a young and inexperienced cat, is driven by her mating instinct out of her usual territory and is exposed to new dangers. Y M978.
- MURPHY, Robert. *The Peregrine Falcon*. 1963. 157 p. The story of the first year in the life of a falcon, Varda, and the perilous journey from her birthplace in northern Canada to the Florida Keys. M978.
- MURPHY, Robert. *The pond*. 1964. 254 p. The winner of the Dutton Animal book award for 1964, this is the story of the day-by-day adventures of a boy in the woods who is learning to understand dogs, coon hunting and human beings. M978.
- MURPHY, Robert. *The stream*. 1971. 205 p. The story of a natural, unspoiled, 2,000 acre tract of woodland and stream and the animals and birds that live there. Y M978.
- ROTHERY, Brian. *The crossing*. 1971. 152 p. A scientist, on a research mission in the Arctic, finds himself battling the harsh elements when his new store, by mistake, has been air-dropped miles away. R846.
- RUSSELL, Franklin. *Corvus the crow*. 1972. 116 p. A year in the life of a crow beginning with the harsh days of winter when he was forced by crippling injuries to remain at the pond and become one of the balancers of life. Y R963.
- SITTS, Paula E. *The glad season*. 1967. Twelve-year-old Davey and his grandmother move from Seattle to live in the remote and unsettled cariboo country of British Columbia. S623.



YAMNUSKA. Introductory studies of a natural area with proposals for its protection and use..

Yamnuska Natural Area Study Committee,
Bow Valley Naturalists, Box 1693, Banff,
Alta. T0L 0C0
1974, 46 pp., \$2.00

The traveller who approaches the Rocky Mountains from Calgary along the Trans-Canada or 1A Highway usually remembers the first mountain with its steep rock face dominating the entrance to the Canmore Corridor of the Rockies. This mountain, officially renamed Mount Laurie in 1961, after John Laurie who helped establish the Indian Association of Alberta and completed a Stoney Indian dictionary, is known to many as Yamnuska.

This mountain and the surrounding area to the south have been under study during 1974 by members of the Bow Valley Naturalists with assistance from some members of the Calgary Field Naturalist's Society. The results of their study have now been put together in a report in support of their earlier proposal that the Yamnuska area be protected through some form of natural area legislation, possibly as an addition to the Bow Valley Provincial Park, which is on the opposite side of the Bow River but does not include any mountain zones.

The report, which includes a useful map of the proposed Yamnuska Natural Area, is divided into five sections, by far the largest of which is the Natural History section. It includes a report by L. E. Jackson on the geologic features which describes the McConnell Fault thrust which brought Late Cambrian limestones into juxtaposition and superposition with Late Cretaceous sandstone, coal and shale beds, which are 350 million years younger than the limestone. He also notes the excellent examples of glacial and post glacial features, including drumlins, moraines, kames, kettles and eskers, all of which can be viewed from the base of the cliffs of Mt. Yamnuska. The authors of the report on the forests and habitat areas are not noted, but the naturalist will find that for

each major habitat type notes are provided on the physiographic features, the major plant species by common name, and the birds and mammals recorded in the area. Further information on the mammals and birds, although not surveyed extensively, can be found on another page of this section. One appendix is an annotated list of 74 species of birds. The other provides an annotated list of the vascular flora, with a total of 300 species, including 93 not listed for the adjacent Bow Valley Park. This list indicates the botanical diversity that can be found in this interesting transitional zone between the prairie foothills/aspen parkland and the subalpine/alpine zones of the Rocky Mountains. The report also includes mention of the moths, skippers and butterflies collected in the area on brief trips by the author, C. D. Bird and others. Although notes are provided for only 29 species, Dr. Bird predicts that at least 300 moths, skippers and 50 butterflies will eventually be found in the area.

Other sections of the report include historical notes, archaeology, present uses of the area (recreational and otherwise), and an assessment and recommendations for the area, the latter by R. C. Scace, a Recreation and Land Use Planning Consultant. There is also a report on rock climbing at Yamnuska by Margaret Gmoser. The mountain and cliff faces are a favorite with climbing groups because of their accessibility from the highway, long climbing season and relatively good rock.

This report will be useful to naturalists familiar with this area and would provide a useful guide for those passing through who might consider spending a few hours there. If the report is reprinted some attention should be given to correcting typographical errors, the most noticeable being the duplication of the last line on page 13.

The appearance of this study in report form is most welcome and the Yamnuska Natural Area Study Committee under the chairmanship of

Robert N. Smith of Seebe are to be commended for their efforts. I hope that they will be further rewarded when the area is afforded some protection. Their report documents well the recreational and interpretive values of this area, as was recognized by the Alberta Environment Conservation Authority in their "Land Use and Resource Development in the Eastern Slopes: Report and Recommendations," September 1974, page 134. John M. Powell, Northern Forest Research Centre, 5320 - 122nd Street, Edmonton, Alberta.

OWLS

by Tony Angell
University Washington Press,
Seattle, Washington.
1974. 80 p. \$12.95.

Angell's *Owls* is not for "bird lovers" only; it is a book that can be appreciated and enjoyed by almost anyone. Angell has combined his talent as an artist, his personal interest in owls and his sensitivity as a teacher to form a book that fully brings out the fascination of these amazing birds.

As an artist, he has the unique talent of capturing every detail of his subject. For example: his marvellous drawing of the Snowy Owl shows the covering of this bird as furry textured rather than the expected feathery effect in such amazing detail. Round deep eyes with the slight tilt of the head; low, lid-drooped looks; sleepy squints; the various attitudes of the owls thus bringing out these birds' beauty and intelligence more fully than any photograph could.

The sketches effortlessly draw one's attention to the text. What is this? An owl thrown on his back in the struggle with a rat!

His writing is not an accumulation of cold scientific data but, pleasant, easy reading. In narrative form he describes their habitats, and lifestyle and relates his experiences with the various types of owls. Even his reference to the intricate sensory

systems that aid the owl in hunting is exciting reading.

I would suggest that this book be placed in school libraries so that the young can have easy access to it and, thereby, gain an appreciation of these beautiful birds.

Certainly, Tony Angell is an immaculate perfectionist.

A delightful book for all! — *Esther Solsberg*, 2434 Cairns Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Letters

ANOTHER SASKATOON WOOD THRUSH

by PAT O'NEIL*

It gave me great pleasure to see, again, a Wood Thrush which visited my back yard three days in a row — April 27, 28, 29, 1974. It seemed to be travelling with a fairly large group of Hermit Thrushes. Unfortunately, they did not stay in the yard for periods sufficiently long for me to notify other birders.

It may be of interest to recall that it was this same back yard that drew the Wood Thrush May 24, 1973, when he stayed feeding for a couple of hours. There was sufficient time to call in several well-known birders all of whom identified the bird as a Wood Thrush. The sighting was reported as the first authenticated record for Saskatchewan (*Blue Jay*, March, 1974, Vol. 32, No. 1).

* 1125 Elliott Street,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.